

**HILLSBOROUGH TOWNSHIP BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT**  
**PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**  
**May 25, 2016**

Chairman Dr. Sireci called the Board of Adjustment meeting of May 25, 2016 to order at 7:35 p.m. All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting took place in the Courtroom of the Municipal Complex.

**ROLL CALL:**

Frank Herbert - Present	Frank Valcheck - Present
John Stamler - Absent	Dr. Steven Sireci, Jr., <i>Chairman</i> - Present
Helen Haines, <i>Vice Chairman</i> - Present	Steve Monte (Alt. 1) - Present
Curtis Suraci - Present	John Shockley (Alt. 2) - Present
Fred Gladstone - Present	Philomena Cellilli (Alt.3) - Absent
	John Torok (Alt. 4) - Absent

Also in attendance: Mark Anderson, Esq., Board Attorney (Woolson Sutphen Anderson, P.A.); William H. R. White, III, P.E., C.M.E., Board Engineer (Maser Consulting, P.A.); David Maski, PP, AICP, Planning Director/Board of Adjustment Secretary; and Susan Baber, CCR.

**NOTICE OF MEETING**

Chairman Dr. Sireci announced the meeting has been duly advertised according to Section 5 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, Public Law 1975 ("Sunshine Law").

**ACCEPTANCE OF MEETING MINUTES**

None

**ACCEPTANCE OF RESOLUTIONS**

None

**BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR (For Matters Not on the Agenda)**

None

**PUBLIC HEARING - APPLICATIONS**

**Muslim Center of Somerset (New Amwell Rd)** - File BA-15-24 - Block 162, Lots 20.01 & 20.02 - 22 & 26 New Amwell Road. Applicant seeking to change conditions in resolution and other such variances, waivers, and approvals required to permit various activities related to a Muslim house of worship on property in the CR zone. ***Continued from April 6, 2016 without further notice.***

1. Niall O'Brien, Esq, Archer & Grenier, representing the Applicant, summarized the request in front of the Board.
2. Amjad Ghori, Treasurer of Muslim Center of Somerset, who was previously sworn in, testified that if a service exceeds 49 attendees, an outside location will be used.
3. Mr. Ghori described the process to be used to determine how many people plan to attend a service and thus control the limit.
4. Mr. Ghori testified that the Muslim Center will use a security company to monitor the parking and number of attendees.
5. Mr. Ghori addressed the attendance of a specific Friday prayer session that took place at the Manville Elks Lodge on March 4, 2016.
6. Mr. Ghori noted that there is no restriction to the number of cars or attendees at the Manville Elks Lodge.
7. Mr. Ghori testified that there are usually 50-60 attendees at a Friday service.
8. Open to questions from the public.
9. Barbara Santonastaso, Resident, asked about controlling offsite parking.
10. There was further discussion of the uniformed security officers. Mr. Ghori agreed to one security guard with it being increased to two if needed.
11. Donna Morgan, Resident, asked about the number of attendees at services being held currently.
12. Paul Botochinek, Resident, asked about a written document reflecting all the Applicant's requests that was mentioned at a previous hearing.
13. Mr. Anderson and Mr. Botochinek discussed his question.
14. Mr. Botochinek and Mr. O'Brien discussed the two parking spaces at the residence.
15. Mr. Botochinek and Mr. Ghori discussed multiple Friday sessions.
16. Mr. O'Brien noted that the public may have a copy of the schedule of activities provided to the Board.

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17. Tamara Faddish, Resident, and Mr. Ghori discussed the services the Muslim Center is currently holding at Temple Beth-El.
18. Ms. Faddish and Mr. O'Brien discussed the two garage parking spots. There will be no "staff only" parking.
19. There was discussion on lighting.
20. There was discussion on prayer session times.
21. John Faddish, Resident, asked about the morning prayer and the potential for growth due to number of children in the community.
22. Danielle Rehman asked about significant surge in traffic in the neighborhood.
23. There was a brief discussion on the site plan that was previously approved.
24. There was a discussion on the legality of differentiating between religions.
25. Mr. Anderson noted that the previous site plan approval did not have conditions for number of people coming and going on the site.
26. Amadeo D'Adamo, Resident, had some questions about modifying the application.
27. Mark La Bracio, Resident, questioned whether anyone will monitor overflow parking in the residential neighborhood.
28. Mr. Ghori testified that the security officers will monitor parking only at Friday noon services and only on the Muslim Center's property.
29. Open to public statements.
30. Donna Morgan was sworn in.
31. Ms. Morgan gave an overview of the traffic study she conducted at the Manville Elks Lodge.
32. There were questions from the Board about her study.
33. John Faddish was sworn in and voiced concerns about the early morning and late night hours in the summer because of the noise. He cited several regulations by the NJDEP.
34. Mr. O'Brien does not object to the evidence but noted the testimony is not submitted by someone with acoustical engineering background.
35. Mr. O'Brien also noted that the application must comply with NJDEP regulations.
36. **Exhibit F-1:** Written information provided by Mr. Faddish regarding noise
37. Mr. Anderson advised the Board on hearsay and accepting this exhibit and testimony.
38. **Exhibit M-1:** Traffic study conducted by Donna Morgan
39. Diane Judkins, part of the leadership of the Presbyterian Church, was sworn in.
40. Ms. Judkins testified that the Muslim Center has been using the church for prayer services for over a year.
41. Ms. Judkins testified they are quiet, flexible, accommodating, and there have been no noise complaints from the surrounding residential neighborhood.
42. There were some questions from the public.
43. Ms. Morgan made comments about the multiple prayer sessions.
44. Josephine Lijun, member of the Presbyterian Church, was sworn in and commented on the number of worshippers and holding multiple services.
45. There was a question about parking which Ms. Lijun had no information on.
46. Amadeo D'Adamo, Resident, was sworn in and made comments in favor of the application.
47. Dennis Salotti, Resident, was sworn in and testified the property in question already generates a lot of noise.
48. Mr. Salotti voiced concerns about cars parking on the residential street and the presence of uniformed guards.
49. Public portion closed.
50. Mr. O'Brien made closing remarks.
51. Mr. Anderson listed the previously approved conditions and the modifications discussed over the several hearings.
52. Mr. O'Brien clarified the request is that no other uses will be happening simultaneously with the prayer sessions but two smaller uses could be scheduled at the same time as long as they comply with the number of people and cars.
53. There was discussion on the existing dumpster.
54. There was a lengthy discussion on off-site parking.
55. There was discussion on whether the Board will vote on the application at this hearing.
56. There was a motion to approve the application with the conditions as indicated by the Attorney. It was seconded.
57. **Roll Call:** Mr. Valcheck - yes; Mr. Herbert - yes; Mr. Suraci - yes; Mr. Gladstone - yes; Mr. Monte - yes; Vice Chairman Haines - yes; Chairman Dr. Sireci - yes. Motion carries.

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**BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT BUSINESS**

None

**CORRESPONDENCE**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 10:40pm.

*Respectfully Submitted by: Caitlin Davis, Planning & Zoning Clerk*

*Reviewed by: David Maski, PP, AICP, Planning Director/Board of Adjustment Secretary*

APPROVED